

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion and in view of the present amendment, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-2, 7-9, 14 and 19 are cancelled. Claims 3-6, 10-13 and 15-18 are pending in the application.

I. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

In the Office Action, at page 2, numbered paragraph 4, claims 1, 2, 7, 9 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,791,294 B1 to Kazama et al. Claims 1-2, 7, 9 and 19 are cancelled, and accordingly, withdrawal of the § 102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, at page 3, numbered paragraph 8, claims 8 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kazama in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,835,706 to Asahi or U.S. Patent No. 6,442,444 B2 to Matsubara et al. Claims 8 and 14 are cancelled, and accordingly, withdrawal of the § 103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants appreciate the acknowledgement by the Examiner that claims 3, 10 and 15, which are objected to, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, claims 3, 10 and 15 are rewritten in independent form.

The Applicants appreciate the acknowledgement by the Examiner that claims 4-6, 11-13 and 16-18 are allowed.

Conclusion

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1-2, 7-9, 14 and 19 have been cancelled. Claims 1-19 are pending in the application.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

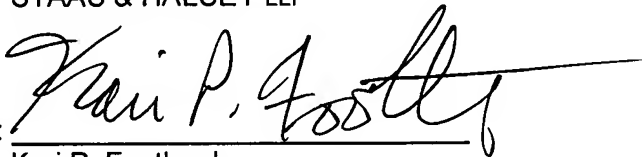
Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: _____

5/19/06

By: _____



Kari P. Footland
Registration No. 55,187

1201 New York Ave, N.W., Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501